

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A data processing system having software for installation, comprising:
  - a first computer configured to receive the software, the first computer being newly added to the data processing system; and
    - a second computer configured to automatically determine when the first computer is added to the data processing system, the second computer being configured to control the installation of the software onto the first computer when it is determined to install the software onto the first computer and is heterogeneous with respect to the first computer.
2. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the software is a version of a program, and wherein the second computer includes a detection component for detecting when the version of the program is outdated and for installing a new version of the program onto the first computer.
3. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the second computer includes a detection component for detecting when a third computer is added to the data processing system and for automatically installing the software onto the third computer in response to the addition of the third computer.
4. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the first computer has an associated first natural language and wherein the second computer has an associated natural language.

5. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the first computer executes an operating system of a first type and wherein the second computer executes an operating system of a second type.

6. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the first computer has a processor of a first type and wherein the second computer has a processor of a second type.

7. The data processing system of claim 1, wherein the first computer executes a network operating system of a first type and wherein the second computer executes a network operating system of a second type.

8. An automatic software installation system, comprising:

    a first computer having an associated natural language and a processor running an operating system, the first computer being newly added to the data processing system; and

    a second computer, heterogeneous with respect to the first computer, having a first component configured to store editions of software, a second component configured to automatically determine the natural language associated with the first computer, the operating system running on the first computer and the type of processor in the first computer and a third component configured to control installation of one edition of the software onto the first computer that is particular to the type of processor in the first computer, the operating system running on the first computer and the natural language associated with the first computer, wherein the second computer installs the edition of the software by utilizing commands that are suitable for the operating system running on the first computer.

9. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 8, wherein the second computer is configured to start the software.

10. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 8, wherein the first computer is associated with a first site and the second computer is associated with a second site.

11. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 10, wherein the second computer manages the second site.

12. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 8, wherein the second computer comprises a helper server, the helper server being configured to install the software on the first computer.

13. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 8, wherein the second computer comprises a detection component configured to detect the first computer.

14. An automatic software installation system comprising:

    a first computer configured to receive one or more application programs, the first computer forming part of a first site comprising a plurality of computers connected together by a first area network;

    a second computer associated with a second site comprising a plurality of computers connected together by a second area network, the second computer being configured to store the one or more application programs and manage the delivery of the one or more software to the first computer by automatically determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system and controlling the installation of the software onto the first computer when it is determined by the second computer to install the software onto the first computer.

15. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the second computer is configured to start the software.

16. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the second computer comprises a helper server, the helper server being configured to install the software on the first computer.

17. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the second computer comprises a detection component configured to detect the first computer.

18. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the first computer has an associated first natural language and wherein the second computer has an associated natural language.

19. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the first computer executes an operating system of a first type and wherein the second computer executes an operating system of a second type

20. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the first computer has a processor of a first type and wherein the second computer has a processor of a second type.

21. The automatic software installation system as recited in claim 14, wherein the first computer executes a network operating system of a first type and wherein the second computer executes a network operating system of a second type.

22. In a data processing system having software for installation a method for installing software onto a computer, the method comprising the acts of:

automatically determining when a first computer is added to the data processing system, the first computer comprising a natural language and a processor running an operating system;

identifying a stored edition of software, at a second computer, that is particular to the natural language, the processor, and the functioning operating system of the first computer;

identifying stored preferences controlling installing the stored edition of the software onto the first computer; and

automatically installing only the edition of the software onto the first computer, directly from the second computer, utilizing commands that are suitable for the functioning operating system running on the first computer and based upon the stored preferences.

23. A method as recited in claim 22, further comprising, automatically starting, by the second computer, the installed edition of the software on the first computer.

24. A method as recited in claim 22, further comprising delivering the edition of the software to a third computer, the third computer installing only the edition of the software onto the first computer directly from the third computer utilizing commands that are suitable for the operating system running on the first computer and based upon the stored preferences.

25. A method as recited in claim 22, wherein determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system occurs periodically.

26. A method as recited in claim 22, wherein determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system occurs in accordance with a predetermined amount of time set by an administrator of the data processing system.

27. A method as recited in claim 22, wherein determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system occurs in accordance with an instruction of an administrator.

28. In a data processing system having software for installation a method for installing software onto a first computer, the method comprising:

a step for determining, remote from the first computer, when the first computer is added to the data processing system, the first computer comprising a natural language and a processor running a functioning operating system;

a step for receiving at the first computer an edition of software that is particular to the natural language, the processor, and the operating system of the first computer;

a step for automatically installing onto the first computer only the edition of the software, under the control of a second computer, utilizing commands that are suitable for the operating system running on the first computer.

29. A computer program product for implementing, in an automatic software installation system, a method for installing software onto a first computer, the computer program product comprising:

    a computer readable medium carrying computer executable instructions for implementing the method, the computer executable instructions, when executed, performing the acts of:

        automatically determining when a first computer is added to the data processing system, the first computer comprising a natural language and a processor running an operating system;

        identifying a stored edition of software, at a second computer, that is particular to the natural language, the processor, and the operating system of the first computer

        identifying stored preferences controlling installing the stored edition of the software onto the first computer; and

        automatically installing only the edition of the software onto the first computer directly from the second computer utilizing commands that are suitable for the operating system running on the first computer and based upon the stored preferences.

30. A computer program product as defined in claim 29, wherein the computer readable medium further carries computer executable instructions for performing the act of automatically starting, by the second computer, the installed edition of the software on the first computer.

31. A computer program product as defined in claim 29, wherein the computer readable medium further carries computer executable instructions for performing the act of delivering the edition of the software to a third computer, the third computer installing only the edition of the software onto the first computer directly from the third computer utilizing commands that are suitable for the operating system running on the first computer and based upon the stored preferences.

32. A computer program product as defined in claim 29, wherein the computer readable medium further carries computer executable instructions for performing the act of periodically determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system.

33. A computer program product as defined in claim 29, wherein the computer readable medium further carries computer executable instructions for performing the act of determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system in accordance with a predetermined time set by an administrator of the data processing system.

34. A computer program product as defined in claim 29, wherein the computer readable medium further carries computer executable instructions for performing the act of determining when the first computer is added to the data processing system in accordance with an instruction of an administrator.